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DD/A Registry

79-1579

OTR 79-3705
20 March 1979

Executive Registry
79-3752

MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy Director of Central Intelligence

VIA: Deputy Director for Administration *js/ DON W.
8/26*

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FROM: Chairman, Language Development Committee

SUBJECT: Report of the Language Development Committee
for Fiscal Year 1978

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File Training

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1. Action Requested: None. This memorandum transmits
the Annual Report for the Language Development Committee
(LDC) for FY 1978.

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2. Background: In 1966 the DCI was concerned with
the loss of language skills and established the Language
Development Committee with a Chairman from the Office of
Training and representatives from each Directorate. The
Committee was tasked to monitor and report on language
capabilities and needs and to initiate a system of incen-
tives which became the Language Proficiency Cash Awards
Program.

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The Committee has reported annually and there is
attached hereto the report for FY 1978. It contains an
analysis of the Agency's foreign language skills inventory,
examines staffing in terms of requirements, reports on the
foreign language skills of new employees, language training
during the period, and the Language Proficiency Cash Awards
Program.

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Notwithstanding the work of the LDC, the Agency
has witnessed a relatively slow, but steady, decline in the
number of personnel who can read or speak foreign languages
at the professional levels,* particularly individuals with

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*Levels 3 through 5--Minimum Professional Proficiency
(S-3 and R-3), Full Professional Proficiency (S-4 and R-4),
and Native or Bilingual Proficiency (S-5 and R-5). Definitions
of proficiency levels are contained in the Report.

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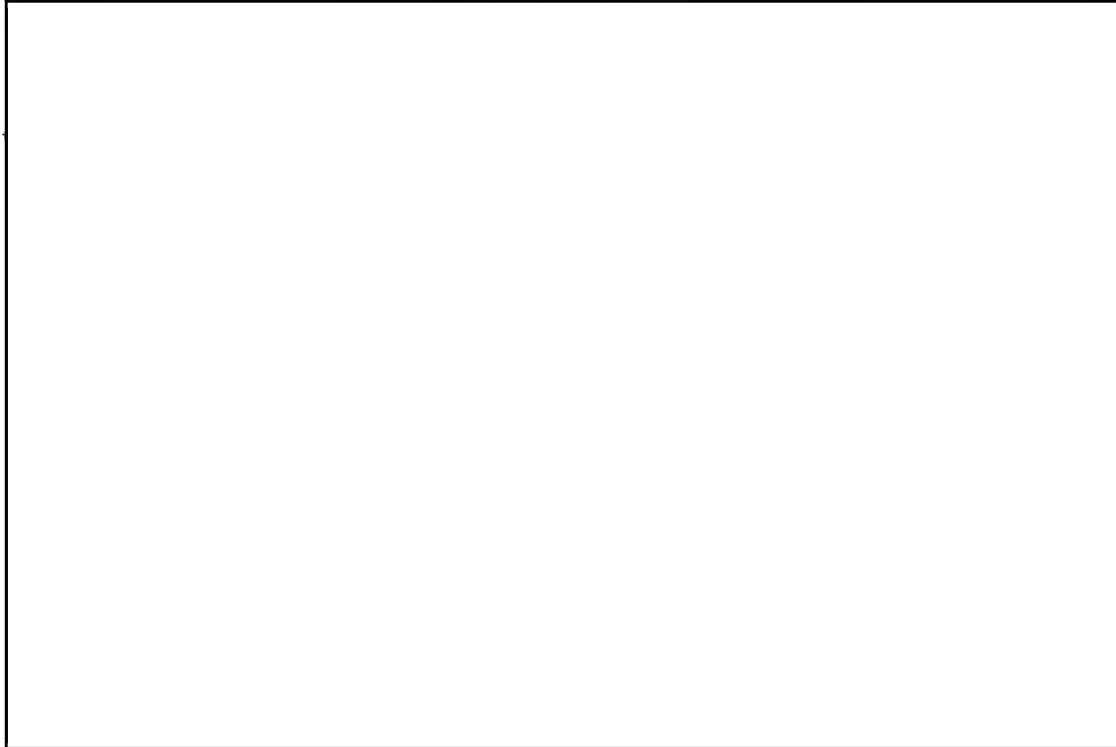
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native or bilingual language skills. The following table, which addressed speaking skills only, provides a quick sketch of this trend.

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It is obvious that the leaching out of CIA's language capabilities is an adverse trend, but its impact on Agency operations is not an assessment which the LDC can make. From 1966 to date, the period covered by the above table, the number of tested foreign language skills at the professional levels decreased by 23%, but the total strength of the Agency fell from a high [] today--a decrease of 23.8%.

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SUBJECT: Report of the Language Development Committee
for Fiscal Year 1978 [redacted]

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Another factor is that a considerable body of language skills also exists among the [redacted]

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[redacted]
available for testing and are not included in the CIA language data base. Finally, the utilization or non-utilization of personnel who have skills in a particular language in positions requiring skill in that language and the replacement of losses through recruitment of new personnel or training are important ingredients. [redacted]

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In sum, the loss of staff personnel with professional language skills, particularly at the Native level, should be evaluated in light of a number of factors, not just a drop in numbers. Only the management of each Directorate is in a position to assess the actual, in contrast to the apparent, seriousness of its foreign language situation. [redacted]

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During the past year the Directorate of Operations and the National Foreign Assessment Center have each addressed the language problem in their respective areas and have initiated measures to counter the decline in language capabilities. [redacted]

3. Recommendation: As recommendations for the expansion of options for retaining or replacing language skills in CIA will be (or have been) forwarded to you by the Deputy Director for Administration, it is recommended that you note the Language Development Committee Report for FY 1978. [redacted]

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Attachment

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for Fiscal Year 1978 [redacted]

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The FY 1978 LDC Report is noted:

Deputy Director of Central Intelligence

Date

Distribution:

Orig - Return to C/LDC
1 - DDCI, w/o att
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